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M/1 Check
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Chet:

When Gordon Gray suggests that it might be a good idea for ONE to meet with the Planning Board, we'd be fools not to take him up. Anything which would contribute to closer ties with our presumed main consumers is all to the good.

However, let's not kid ourselves:

(a) The big issues are not handled in Planning Board anymore now than in the past. Take Bob's mention of Berlin for example. The current crisis has never been in the NSC or Planning Board channel. It is handled entirely separately. Irwin's ignorance of NIE's is not because we don't mention them constantly at Planning Board, it's because his people just don't send them to him.

(b) Hence we don't want to get ourselves tied too closely to a pro forma rule of doing an NIE every time the Planning Board reconsiders a policy, particularly since more and more of these revisions (e.g. Korea, which will be confined to the force ceiling issue) are confined to just one aspect of the policy paper. I don't think ONE, with all its commitments, ought to drum up too much new business at Planning Board on papers which will not be what we would otherwise regard as important.

(c) Lurking in the background is the question of tying NIE's to the OCB report schedule, especially now that this is on an annual basis. Theoretically, this too would be a good idea but once again it would let us in for at least two dozen NIE's a year whether or not we thought the areas were worth an estimate.

(d) On the other hand, having been in the forefront for years of those who decry the lack of high-level audience's interest in NIE's, I feel that there are many other ways of achieving our objectives which would be more effective than a Planning Board briefing (this is not to suggest that the briefing would not be a good idea). For example, we really ought to make more of an effort to get DCI to mention NIE's to his captive audience of the nation's highest officials each Thursday.

Next, the one CIA publication which probably is read by most high policy makers is the CIB. I feel that an occasional one-page summary of key NIE's in the CIB would be well worthwhile. Finally, when we come up with a particularly good NIE there is no reason why we shouldn't do a bit of personal selling; for example, Amory could be asked to drop a line to Irwin commending the Berlin NIE to his attention. We could do the same with Murphy, Merchant, Rountree, etc. Indeed I hope it is SOP for all Board Members to talk up the product on social occasions.

/s/

R. W. KOMER